

# HAMATEURCHATTER

One of the World's Oldest Continuously Active Radio Amateur Clubs - since 1917

**Vol. 13 No. 07 - July, 2005**

## MRAC Officers

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Technology advances at a pace that is sometimes so rapid as to make us dizzy – yet at some times it advances so slowly as to be frustrating. A lot of the timing depends on the potential financial gains.

Look at us and the space program for instance. We are so far behind of where we should be, it is a bit of a surprise to me. Make the comparison, if you will, with the exploration of the oceans of the earth. People knew that ships were not “the safest devices around” there was some redundancy in terms of spare sails and means of making repairs underway, but they did not stop maritime exploration because one ship sank. There was too much money or at least the potential of financial rewards at stake. There was also a race – the European powers all vied for a piece of any discovery. Merchants, looking for new markets, looking for goods to purchase and sell, all of it financially driven, financed the whole thing. If you want to sail, be prepared to risk your life! Today we have another delay in our space program. I am not an advocate of a foolhardy, devil-may-care, approach to space exploration. Indeed a lot of what we are doing is the right way to do it. I am however, a little annoyed with the public that lacks the vision to recognize the potential of space exploration. People fail to recognize the benefits we have already derived from it and the fact that all of the astronauts, anyone of them you could ask, all of them in one voice are ready to give their lives to advance that exploration. I am not calling them suicidal... far from it. They do, however, take on the responsibility

ties and the risks because they understand the potential, they understand the benefits, and they understand the need to advance the human horizon.

We are no longer in a “space race”. There is no threat from above to motivate us to advance at a faster pace. No one sees the financial gold pot at the end of the space rainbow. Yet it is there – land, vast territories, minerals, various forms of wealth yet to be explored. There is an advertisement that summarizes it very well: “We went to the moon. We discovered it wasn’t made of cheese. We haven’t been back... the power of “cheese”. This exemplifies what I am talking about. People in general and governments in particular do not see the long-range benefits of space exploration.

Let’s take a moment to examine some of the shorter-range benefits. I will be talking next Thursday about linear accelerators and the treatment of cancer tumors. That technology has drawn direct benefits from the space program! One of the things that makes the precise treatment of shaped tumors is the ability of our machine to “collimate” the radiation beam to fit the exact contour of the tumor. Tiny motors move solid tungsten alloy blades in a continuous manner, adjusting them as the gantry rotates around the patient and making them fit the contours of the tumor from every angle. Those tiny, powerful, and precise motors are a direct result of the space program. Indeed, a lot of the control circuitry, computer systems, video monitors, LCD screens, and various metal alloys are a direct result of research that was motivated by space exploration. Of course the high power intensity modulated beam is also a direct result of research into

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**Pres. Ltr. cont.d on pg. 4**

# NETS HEARD IN THE MILWAUKEE AREA

DAY	TIME	MHz	ACTIVITY			
Daily	6-8:00 AM	14.2900	Milwaukee / Florida (SSB)	Wed.	8:00 PM	147.2700+ Weather & Swap net
Daily	7:30 AM	144.1550	Breakfast RoundTable (SSB)	Thu.	9:00 PM	50.1600 6 m. SSB Net
Daily	9:30 PM	3.9725	Country Cousins Net	Thu.	9:00 PM	146.9100- Computer Net
Mon.	8:00 PM	146.8650-	ARES Net (Walworth and ARRL news)	<b>Fri.</b>	<b>8:30 PM 28.4900</b>	<b>MRAC W9RH 10 m. Net (SSB)</b>
Mon.	8:00 PM	146.4450	Emergency Net	<b>Fri.</b>	<b>9:00 PM 145.3900-</b>	<b>W9RH 2 m. FM Net after 10 mtr. net</b>
Mon.	8:45 PM	146.6700-	ARRL voice news (ARES)	Sat	9:00 PM	146.9100- Saturday Night Fun Net
Mon.	9:00 PM	50.1600	6 m. SSB NET	Sun.	8:30 AM	3.9850 QCWA (Chptr 55) (SSB)
Mon.	9:00 PM	147.1650+	ARES Net (Milwaukee-Waukesha)	Sun.	9:00 AM	145.5650 X-Country Simplex Group (FM)
Tue.	9:00 AM	50.1600	6 m. 2nd Shifters' SSB Net	Sun.	10:00 AM	443.8000+ FM-38 link to 146.88 Baraboo
Tue.	8:00 PM	144.2500	Badger Contesters (SSB)			SWAPnet
Tue.	9:00 PM	50.1600	6 m. SSB Net.	Sun.	8:00 PM	146.9100- Information Net
Wed.	8:00 PM	145.1300	ARRL voice news	Sun.	9:00 PM	146.9100- Swap Net

2 meter repeaters are offset by 600 KHz -- 70 centimeter repeaters are offset by 5 MHz  
SSB frequencies below 20 meters are LSB and for 20 mtrs and above are USB

## Be a part of the action -- Volunteer!!

### HAMATEURCHATTER

HamateurChatter is the newsletter of MRAC (Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club), a not for profit organization for the advancement of amateur radio and the maintenance of fraternalism and a high standard of conduct.

MRAC Membership dues are \$17.<sup>00</sup> per year and run on a calendar year starting January 1.

MRAC general membership meetings are normally held at 7:00 p.m. the last Thursday of the month except for November (3rd Thursday due to Thanksgiving) and December, when we have our Christmas Dinner.

Meetings are held at:

Redemption Lutheran Church  
Fellowship Hall  
4057 N. Mayfair Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI

### VEC REPORT

MRAC VEC conducted a special VE session to examine the students of a Technician class taught by Don Doss, K9QEN.

There were 4 candidates, and all were successful in qualifying for their Technician licenses. Those VEs who administered the session included the following:

John Kraak ----- KF9XL  
Hal Newton ----- KB9OZN  
Sherm Swanson ---- KB9Q  
Ron Yokes ----- W9BCK

Our next regularly scheduled VE session will be Saturday, July 30, 2005 at 9:30AM at AES.

73,

*John (KF9XL)*

John KF9XL

### Credits

Our thanks to our news contributors this month:

KG9FC      WB9PTC      W9UQ  
K9LCQ           KF9XL

Our thanks goes to:

Rita Doneis, Tom Fuszard, and Hal Newton for proofreading the 'Chatter this month.

Dick Wood for mailing the hard copy of the 'Chatter.

Tom Schulte, AB9EK who Emails the 'Chatter.

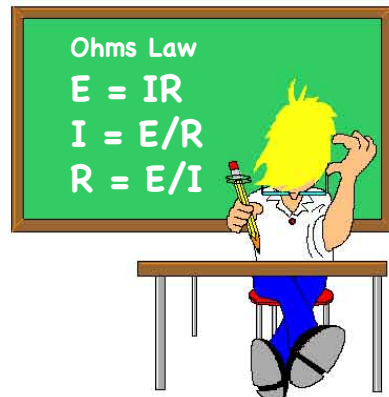
Howard Parks, who administers our Web Site.

Ted Stiller for obtaining and serving refreshments at our meetings.

Tom Sherlowsky and Jacquie Horwitz for taking care of the raffle at the meetings.

Mark Tellier, Tom Czaja, John Kraak and Tom Fuszard who manage our VEC.

## Thank YOU!



# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 6/30/05

Club president Patrick, W9UQ, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Patrick introduced himself, welcomed members and visitors and announced two new members. The microphone was passed for those in attendance to introduce themselves.

Club secretary Brian, K9LCQ read the May membership meeting minutes. There were no additions or corrections. Sherm, KB9Q, made a motion to accept minutes as read and was seconded by Dick, W9JBE. The motion passed by voice vote.

Club treasurer Tom, AB9EK, read the treasurer's report for the past month.

After the reading of the report, There were no additions or corrections. Sherm, KB9Q, made a motion which was seconded by Les, AB9EY. The motion passed by voice vote.

Jerry, WA9CGE, as Field Day chairman gave a brief synopsis on how Field Day went. Jerry stated that the logs are being reviewed and that will take several more days to complete. There were 5 HF radios in use at Pioneer Village. No VHF or UHF frequencies were used. The food was good.

The rain that came late Saturday evening caused a suspension of operations due to noise.

Those that attended had a good time. Unfortunately participation was down this year. Jerry received a round of applause for a job well done.

Mark, AB9CD, gave us an update on the search for a repeater controller that was talked about at the last meeting. Mark found one on Ebay and was the successful bidder at \$330. Somewhat less than what they sold for new.

Dave, KA9FUR, (the Wisconsin frequency coordinator who has been very helpful to our club) cur-

rently has possession of the controller and is checking it out. Dave is very familiar the controller having sold and serviced the controllers. Dave tells us that controller is only a few years old as it is recent version.

Also purchased were a digital audio delay (DAD) and a Digital Voice Recorder (DVR). The DAD is used to clean up the squelch at the end of transmissions.

It gives the repeater a more professional sound. The DVR will be used to easily change the messages that will be heard on the repeater. And lastly a telephone interface was purchased to allow remote control of the controller over the telephones.

Provided the controller checks out, we will swap it with the current controller. When the swap does occur the repeater will be unavailable for about 30 minutes. The swap will occur when we can schedule time with Dave so he can help with the installation.

The cost of the controller and support gear exceeds the \$600 limit set last month. It's felt that the sale of our current controller will more than offset the cost overrun on our recent purchase.

The recent problem we have been experiencing with the repeater sounding off frequency was actually high distortion. The clipper circuit was performing as designed, limiting the audio out of the controller caused the distortion. After some poking around, Dave found the gain potentiometer was defective allowing too much audio into the controller. The potentiometer, wired as

a rheostat, was removed examined and reinserted in reverse. The potentiometer was adjusted for proper operation. The intermittent problem of high distortion appears to have been solved, as it has not been heard since the repair was made.

Joe, KA9DFZ, gave an update on the progress of obtaining promotional material for the club. Joe passed around a preliminary label for comment. If printed as "sticky labels" they would very nicely cover the address label on your about to be discarded QSTs or other amateur radio publication. It was suggested that we leave our QSTs in doctors' or dentists' offices with these labels attached. Joe then made a motion to purchase the labels; there was no time for a second. There were objections raised. Some members wanted to see the final artwork before committing club funds. Brian, K9LCQ, made a motion to table Joe's motion until the July meeting when artwork should be available. Patrick assured the membership that artwork would be available in July. A vote to table Joe's motion passed without objection.

Several members talked about where they found band openings and what frequencies. Many reported success on 20 meters into South

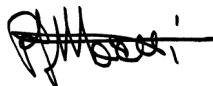
**minutes cont.d on pg. 4**



## EXAM SCHEDULE

Sat., July 30, 2005  
9:30 a.m. @ AES  
AES is Amateur  
Electronic Supply  
5710 W. Good Hope Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI

better radars, more powerful lasers, and better communication equipment. The precise generation of a nearly homogeneous particle beam can be attributed to plasma research in line with space exploration. Now, some will attribute most of this research and rightly so, to military needs. I prefer to think of this as a peaceful planet – or at least one where peace will eventually thrive. (Our wars are caused by population pressures). We should go to space to explore the vast available territories waiting for us there. Explore now the same way some of the folks that make our way of life possible set out across the ocean and discovered the lands we live on. Explore space - and yes, please take a radio along so we can keep in touch.

73,   
Patrick

America.

Mark, AB9CD, informed the club that the Ozaukee County Historical Society (OCHS) has asked all the groups that have a relationship with Pioneer Village to provide a little assistance this year. The caretaker at the Pioneer Village as undergone a medical procedure preventing him from doing certain tasks, one of which is painting/staining.

The OCHS asked us to stain one of their buildings. The project was discussed at the board meeting and it was felt that the membership be presented with the request.

The building is approximately 20 feet by 50 feet by 8 feet with a couple of doors, a window and track system. The staining should be very straightforward with no climbing for most members. The climbing that does need to be performed would be up a rung or two on a standard stepladder. The OCHS will provide all the necessary supplies. We need only to show up. The date for this work will be August 20th. A sign up sheet was provided with several members planning on attending.

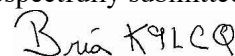
Tom, AB9EK, announced that the daugh-

ter of one of the founding members has contacted the club. She has material left to her by her father that we might be interested in. Her contact information was passed along to Dave, WB9BWP, our club historian for follow-up contact.

Tom, AB9EK, announced that the club has been contacted by someone who has a tower which is free to anyone willing to remove it. If interested contact Tom, AB9EK, and he will provide you with the tower owner's contact information. Patrick reminded everyone of the hazards and liability when removing a tower.

Tom, AB9EK, made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Sherm, KB9Q. A voice vote passed the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian White, K9LCQ

MRAC Secretary

## DEADLINE : OTA CW CLASSES

The **deadline** for items to be published in **HamateurChatter** is the 7th day of each month. If you have anything (announcements, stories, articles, photos, projects) for the 'Chatter, please get it to me before then.

You may contact me by e-mail at:

[pancho@thepark.net](mailto:pancho@thepark.net)

or by snailmail at:

**Pancho Doneis - KA9OFA**

**1958 N. 38th St.**

**Milwaukee, WI 53208**

or by phone at:

**(414) 344-4694**

Dick McNew, WB9PTC, is still holding his "On The Air" code lessons/practice sessions. The class/practice is held on Monday and Friday at 6:00 p.m. on our repeater.

He starts off with a rehash of what he worked on before and then goes on to new characters. When he is done, he shifts gears and picks up a little speed towards the end. In between, he explains some operating practices, usually having to do with CW operation.

## REMINDERS!

Please check in to our nets on Friday evenings.

Our ten meter SSB net is at **8:30 p.m.** at **28.490 MHz. USB.**

Our two meter FM net follows at 9:00 p.m. on our repeater at **145.390 MHz** with a minus offset and a **PL of 127.3 Hz.**

Join us for Saturday morning breakfast at **Maxim's Restaurant, 18025 W. Capitol Dr.** We usually meet at around 8:00 a.m., and order around 8:15 a.m.

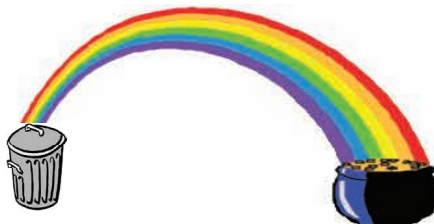
## EVENTS

**MRAC Gen. Membership Mtg.**  
THU. - JUL. 28, 2005

Circus City SwapFest \*  
SAT. - AUG. 13, 2005  
Sauk Co. Fairgrounds  
Baraboo, WI

T/I on 147.315+ repeater w/ 123.0PL

**MRAC Gen. Membership Mtg.**  
THU. - AUG. 25, 2005



Radio Expo 2005  
SAT. & SUN. - SEP. 17 & 18, 2005  
Lake Co. Fairgrounds  
Grayslake, IL  
T/I on 146.16/76 (107.2 PL)

Peoria Superfest \*  
FRI. - SUN. - SEP. 16, 17, 18, 2005  
Exposition Gardens Fairgrounds  
Peoria, IL

\* indicates VE testing is available.

## MY ORDEAL WITH PSK31 BY CARLOS - KG9FC

This is the true ordeal I experienced using PSK31.

I recently returned to ham radio after being off the air for about three years. I almost went QRT again when high winds broke my R5 vertical antenna. Thanks to Bob, W9CYI, who sold me some parts for that antenna, I was soon back on the air and participating in our Friday night nets.

I recently heard about PSK31 and wanted to try it. Trying it was difficult because it uses HF and the sound card of a computer. I needed an interface, so I purchased a RIGblaster (by West Mountain Radio) gnommic from AES for about \$60. The RIGblaster comes with a CD and instructions for connecting the radio to the computer.

First, connect the speaker output of your transceiver to the audio input of the interface, and connect interface to the microphone input on your computer. This is enough to read what is coming in on 20 meters. (A popular PSK31 frequency is 14.070.0 MHz.)

Next, connect your computer's serial cable to the interface and the audio output to the mike terminal on your radio.

The first time I tried it I could read stations, but I could not get my radio to transmit. After spending about a half day checking my audio terminals, I decided to ask for help. Tom, WI9TOM, created some macros, which helped. I could now transmit, but no one could read my messages. They saw a signal but no words.

I then asked Bob to tune and adjust my radio for lowest SWR using an antenna tuner. Unfortunately, that didn't help. No one was able to read my signal, despite the "waterfall" signal they were receiving. Sherm, KB9Q, helped me check the hook up; that was fine. Still, no one responded to my CQs.

Jeff, N9EDQ, of AES, offered to bring his radio to my shack. I tried several calls, but still no reply. I even answered a few CQs from other hams with no luck. I was ready to give up when I decided to try another computer I had at home.

I set up that computer and - Bingo! It worked! Jeff from AES replied to my call. To improve performance I increased the mic gain on my radio, which increased the

output power of the radio. On Saturday, June 11, I had my first long-distance contact with K1GMD in Georgia and a short contact with K9RYW. He helped me a lot since he uses PSK31 regularly.

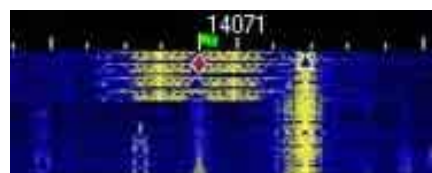
So, that was the end of my ordeal. In my opinion, using PSK31 is not that easy. At least for me, it required a lot of adjustments of the volume control of the sound card, among other tasks.

Anyway, I finally got it to work with my second computer. Mission accomplished!

I might have to do the same thing with my old radio, a Yaesu FT-102. I know that will work with my new computer.

Tnx for reading.

Carlos Barron  
KG9FC



*Digipan PSK31 waterfall display*

The **next meeting of M.R.A.C.**  
will be **Thursday, July 28, 2005**  
at **7:00 PM** at:

**Redemption Lutheran Church**

Fellowship Hall

4057 N. Mayfair Rd.

(Use the south entrance)

**HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

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**Please, DON'T call the church.**

**Our Repeater:**

**145.390 MHz - offset with  
PL of 127.3 Hz**

**Use it today!**

**Our program for the  
July meeting will be  
the second half of  
Patrick's (W9UQ  
presentation on ra-  
diation treatment of  
cancer.**

Visit our website at **[www.qsl.net/mrac/](http://www.qsl.net/mrac/)**

Our phone **(414) 332-MRAC**  
**332-6 7 2 2**



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